



USAG Ansbach's

Cultural Calendar

April 2009

U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach — "Your Army Home!"

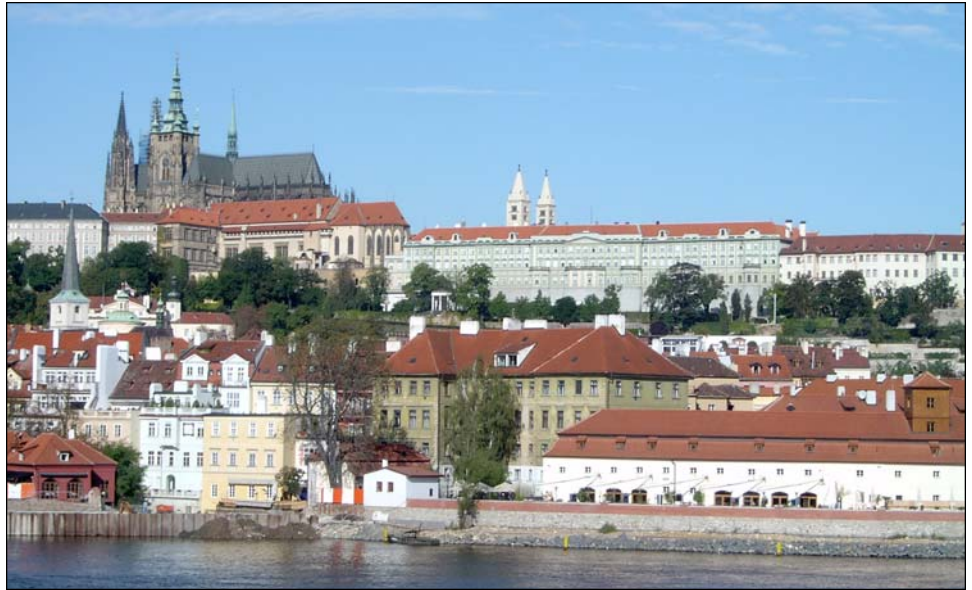


Wander Prague for history, art, shopping, nightlife

With spring break around the corner and promises of nice weather, Prague, one of Europe's grand cities, might make a perfect destination for the upcoming long weekend.

About a three- to four-hour drive from the Ansbach–Illesheim area, Prague is well worth a visit. This grand capitol of the Czech Republic has something for everyone: historians, artists, party animals and shoppers.

Dominating the city is Prague Castle, a huge hilltop complex of houses, churches and monuments. The most prominent building on the Castle Hill is the grandly Gothic St. Vitus Cathedral. This house of worship boasts 21 ornate side chapels and stunning stained glass windows. Be sure to



The Castle District is one of the most visited areas of Prague. Castle Hill includes the castle itself and the Gothic cathedral St. Vitus. The Strahov monastery and brewery is located nearby as well.

April dates of interest for Franken, Bavaria, Germany

April's fool day:

As in the States, April 1 is the day of hoaxes, practical jokes and fools' errands.

School Break:

School breaks in Germany vary from State to State. The so-called Easterferien "Easter break" for Bavaria is scheduled for Apr. 6-18.

Easter Holidays

Good Friday—this year Apr. 10 and Easter Monday Apr. 12 are official holidays in Germany. Good Friday is an official holiday.

For more on Easter in Germany, see Page 5

check out the cathedral's exterior as well.

The façade is decorated with statues of saints and beautiful bronze doors that have relief work showing the construction of the cathedral. The back of the cathedral is an impressive sight with an intricate network of flying buttresses. After circling the cathedral, wander through the buildings of Castle Hill.

Bring a good guidebook that will tell you about the historic places you will pass.

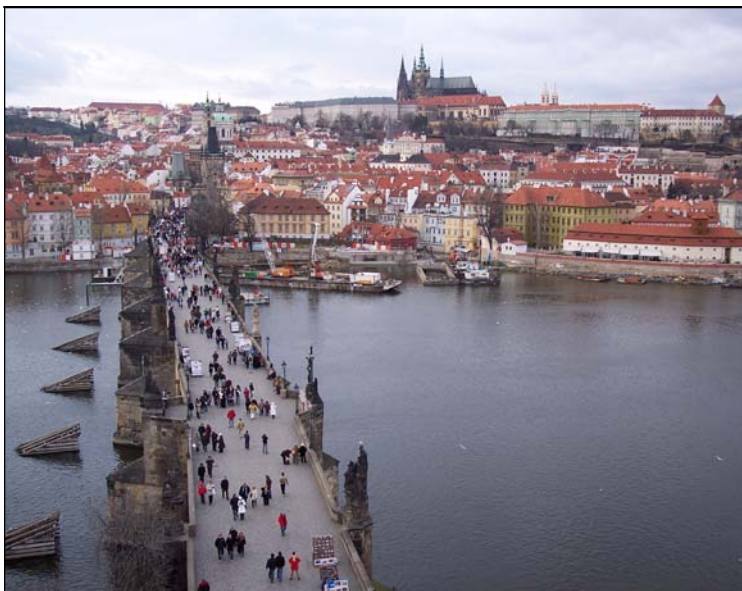
When you are finished on Castle Hill, walk down one of the long sets of stairs and make your way to Charles Bridge. One of many bridges spanning the Vltava River, the Charles Bridge is by far the best known, and one of the most visited sights in Prague.

This 1,700-foot-long pedestrian walkway is known for two different things that line its walls. The first attraction is the 30 statues along both sides of this celebrated bridge.

The statues mainly depict saints and religious figures. Saints both famous and unknown are represented here. Saint John the Baptist and Saint Wenceslas have statues here alongside the lesser known Saint Lutigarde and Saint Adalbert.

The other main attraction along the Charles Bridge is the numerous artisans and musicians that congregate here daily. Paintings and drawings, handmade jewelry and pottery, and other craft items are for sale on both sides of this ancient path. Return to the Charles Bridge at night, as well, after the salesmen have gone. The cathedral on Castle Hill is lit until midnight,

** See next page*



The Charles Bridge is one of many bridges spanning the Vltava River. It is by far the best known bridge, and one of the most visited sights, in Prague.

Photo by Giel Op 't Veld

making Charles Bridge a wonderful post-dinner romantic stroll. After you cross Charles Bridge, head for the Old Town Square. This large square is surrounded by beautiful baroque style buildings, churches and boasts numerous cafes. Stop here for some coffee and gaze around one of the most beautiful town squares in Europe.

One of the most popular sights in Prague is here in the Old Town Square. The Astronomical Clock is an amazing scientific instrument to behold. This extremely complex clock, built in 1410, does not actually show the time.

Its numerous dials and hands show the phases of the moon, the seasons, the date, the equinoxes and various Christian holy days.

Twice a day, at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., the clock chimes and its glockenspiel

kicks into action showing a morality play featuring the 12 Apostles sliding by, while figures depicting greed, death, vanity, and corruption dance below.

The history buff will want to pay a visit to some of the oldest sights in European Jewish history.

The Old-New Synagogue, built in 1270 is

Europe's oldest Jewish house of worship. It is still in use today, over 700 years later. Across the street from the synagogue is the darkly beautiful Old Jewish Cemetery, one of the world's most crowded burial grounds.

Laws of the 15th century did not allow Prague's Jewish population much room to bury their dead, so graves were dug so that they could accommodate 12 bodies vertically.

The gravestones were then crowded together on the surface, one in front of another. The resulting sea of gravestones is a stark reminder of the long, hard history of Jews in Europe.

Travelers looking for shopping will not be disappointed. Local artisans turn out beautiful works of all kinds.

Pottery, paintings and other works of art can be bought from street-side ven-

dors as well as upscale galleries.

Deep red garnets, a semi-precious stone mined in the Czech Republic, are sold at every turn in every conceivable kind of jewelry. Some of the world's finest crystal and glassware is also for sale, glittering in well-lit store windows.

If it is nightlife you seek, Prague delivers. Upscale dining, smoky bars, pulsing nightclubs and refined classical concerts are all available nearly every night of the week.

Prague is the most international of cities, and as you work your way through the theaters, bars and clubs, the multilingual babble of students from across the globe will astound.

No matter what you come to Prague to see—history, art, nightlife—you must be sure to partake in the most enchanting activity the city has to offer. Put away your map and guidebook and get lost.

That's right, wander the labyrinths of twisting alleyways and convoluted side streets. Every twist and turn will bring you face to face with stunning architecture, cute shops, quaint restaurants and hundreds of years of history.

A few hours wandering the back streets of Prague is an experience not to be forgotten.

For those who prefer not to drive, the train is a great alternative.

There are various trips each day from Ansbach and Bad Windsheim. For more train information, go to <http://www.deutschebahn.com/site/bahn/en/start.html>

Story by Alice Adler

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Fränkische Schweiz - Franconian Switzerland

The Fränkische Schweiz, one of the most beautiful landscapes in Germany is "right around the corner" from where you live. This small area, which is outlined by the cities of Bamberg, Forchheim and Bayreuth, is defined by many contrasts, like high rocky cliffs, winding river valleys, blooming orchards and mysterious caves. There are many possibilities for hiking, kayaking, bicycling or free-climbing. Historic castles, towers and ruins invite you for a visit. Limestone caves with names like "Devil's

Cave" (Teufelshöhle), "Bing Cave" (Binghöhle) and "Sophie's Cave" (Sophienhöhle) are waiting to be explored. Franconian

Switzerland is also the region with the highest density of breweries

in Germany (72 breweries with hundreds of different types of beer to be sampled). All summer long you will find traditional fests in the small towns all around the area. For a ride with a historic train and steam engine go to Forchheim-Ebermannstadt every Sunday in summer. A detailed train schedule in English can be found at <http://www.dfs.ebermannstadt.de>



American football club right out your back door

Franken Knights offer a taste of home, at your home away from home.

The Franken Knights, a German football club playing American football, offers a change to the traditional German fussball or soccer.

"We feel it is a common base to build friendships," said Dr. Joachim Gleiss, president of the football club.

With over 300 members strong, the American football club is just right out your back door.

Based out of Rothenberg, just a few clicks west of Ansbach, the club of-

fers opportunities for everyone.

"There are volunteer positions in every field," said board member Guenther Opel.

"We have something for everyone and every skill base-if not we can find something,"

And they welcome all-Americans and their families, with sidelining opportunities.

From players and coaching to finance, gear and water managers, "We have something for everyone and every skill base-if not we can find something," said Opel.

"It is all about team building," said Guenther Opel.

"The Franken Knights is a fine tool to connect American and Germans together."

The FK football season starts mid-April and ends in August, "so we can watch the American football season in the fall," said Gleiss.

For complete details and a schedule for the Franken Knights, go to www.franken-knights.de; email at info@franken-knights.de, or call Opel at 09843-2953/97990.



What's happening

Guided Tour—Rothenburg

For those who are interested in some background information about the medieval town, the city of Rothenburg offers guided tours in English April 4 to Nov. 1, every Saturday and Thursday at 2 p.m.

The 99-minute tour starts at the market square. Here, you will hear the story about the city councilor's tavern, the windows of the artistic clock and get some information about the town hall that combines Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque architecture. The tour goes to St. Jacob's Church, the Old-Rothenburg Craftsman's

House and more.

Tour price is €6 and should be paid to the tour guide.

For more, call the Rothenburg Tourism Service, Marktplatz 2 in Rothenburg at 09861-404-800.

Historical dance

The traditional shepherds' dance performance in Rothenburg is scheduled for April 12 at 2 p.m.

Spectators will enjoy a colorful his-



Photo by Jim Hughes

Downtown Rothenburg

torical dance performance in 19th century costumes at the market place of Rothenburg ob der Tauber.

According to medieval legend, the local shepherds prevented the spreading of the plague in the city of Rothenburg.

As a reward, the Shepherds' Guild was granted the privilege of celebrating Shepherds' Day. Historically, the shepherds' dance is a tradition dating back to 1517.

Nowadays, the dance is conducted in spring, summer and fall. Ticket prices range from 3 to 4.50 Euro. For ticket reservations, call 09861-4611.

Sheketka Rhythm in Motion

"Sheketka," an Israeli show combining elements of dance, theater, life music and special effects is coming to the Stadthalle Fürth, Rosenstr. 50 in Fürth April 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Dancers perform everything from body percussion and tap dance to free style, hip hop and break dance.

Ticket prices range from €17.90 to €39.90. Tickets are available at the Kultur Information Nuremberg, Königstr. 93. For ticket reservations, call 09-11-231-4000.

The return of Shaolin

If you are interested in the secrets of Shaolin Kung Fu, the city of Bamberg has something for you. Shaolin-grandmaster Liang Yiquan and his most talented Shaolin fighters will guide the audience through



1,500 years of Shaolin history in a fascinating show performance. Incredible body control, spectacular fighting and meditation techniques are what the show is made of. Legend tells that the Indian monk Bodhi Dharma—after nine years of meditation—started to modify the doctrine

of Buddha to decrease the strain of day-long meditations by way of breathing exercises and techniques. With his new techniques, Dharma developed the basis of Shaolin Kung Fu, enabling the monks to control the body in a way that they become close to being pain resistant. Grandmaster Liang Yiquan and his Shaolin fighters perform the century-old Kung Fu techniques and the "mystical secrets" of Qi Gong April 2 at 8 p.m. at the Jako Arena, Forchheimer Str. 15 in Bamberg.

Ticket prices range from €24 to €44. For ticket reservations, call 0951-23-837. Tickets are available at the site of the event.

Spring Fest

Bad Windsheim hosts its traditional spring fest April 11 from 2-11 p.m. at Festplatz am Schießwasen. Carnival rides, traditional food and drinks, live entertainment and, of course, the official keg tapping will be a part of the day's activities. As a special family treat, carnival ride prices between 2 and 2:30 p.m. are €0.50 per ride.

Circus the African way

Over 100 acrobats, dancers and musicians from different African nations provide an African circus experience with colorful costumes, ecstatic dancers with impressive masks and acrobatic stunts April 22 at the Jako Arena, Forchheimer Str. 15 in Bamberg.

Ticket prices range from €35.60 to

€80.60. For ticket reservations, call 0951-23-837. Tickets are available at the event location.

Fire of Anatolia

The dance show, "Fire of Anatolia," comes to the Meistersingerhalle, Münchner Straße 21, in Nuremberg April 2 at 8 p.m.

"Fire of Anatolia" is based on the mythology and history of Anatolia. With 3,000 dance figures and Anatolian music the show combines traditional Anatolian dance with ballet and modern dance.

The show holds two Guinness records, one for the fastest dance performance with 241-steps-per minute and one for the largest audience of 400,000 people.

Ticket prices range from €31 to €56. Tickets are available at the Theaterkasse in the "Karstadt" department store, Königsstr. 14 or at the event location.

Romeo and Juliet ballet

See the story of the famous couple, Romeo and Juliet, on the ballet stage April 6 at 8 p.m. at the Staatstheater Nuremberg Richard-Wagner-Platz 2 in Nuremberg. Ticket price range from €7.90 to €37.70.

Benditos Malditos

The ballet "Benditos Malditos," is on stage of the TAFELHALLE Äußere Sulzbacher Str. 62 in Nuremberg April 8 and 9, kicking off both days at 8 p.m.

"Benditos Malditos" premiere was in 2007 at the festivall Veranos de la Villa.

The original choreography was done for the Balett Nacional de Cuba.

Ticket prices for "Benditos Malditos," range from €11.90 to €31.90.

Tickets are available at the event location or at the Kultur Information, Königstr. 93 in Nuremberg.

Circus in Town



Europe's largest circus, Circus Krone, will set up its tent April 22-27 at the Ausstellungsgelände, Schalkhäuser Straße in Ansbach. Various jugglers, clowns, acrobats, trapeze artists, cats of prey, a white lion and the world's biggest elephant, with a weight of seven tons, will be part of the program. Fifty-four artists from 14 different nations will entertain the audience.

The shows are scheduled Monday-Saturday at 5.30 p.m. and 8 p.m., and on Sundays and German Holidays at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.

The circus features various animal performances and has its own zoo. Interested visitors will see white lion cubs and other lions, camels, zebras, lamas and more.

Admission prices for the zoo are €4 and €3 for children under the age of 2. Admission during the performance breaks is €2.

Performance ticket prices range from €12 to €32. Tickets are available at the circus tent.

Towns, villages ready to display German Easter traditions

Easter is upon us and local towns and villages are getting ready to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the beginning of spring.

Easter traditions vary from county to county and region to region. Strolling through the local towns and villages in the Ansbach-Illesheim area, you will see wells and fountains decorated with branches, ribbons and eggs for Easter.

This tradition is mainly found in Franconia, but can also be seen in Saxony, Steigerwald and the Pfalz. In earlier times, it was believed that the "Easter water" drawn from these wells and fountains could cure and protect livestock from illness.

In German households it is common that Easter preparations start with a thorough spring clean up to get rid of all the dust which has gathered over the winter months, followed by the decoration of the whole house.

One tradition is to blow eggs and paint them in multiple colors and patterns to hang them on budding willow or birch branches. Of course, Easter hares—in

Germany, it's the Easter hare and not a bunny—as well as baby chicks are part of the decorations. In addition, spring flowers, especially crocuses and daffodils—known as Easter bells (Osterglocken)—can be seen all over.

Hard-boiled eggs will be colored or painted for the breakfast table or to be given as gifts.

Good Friday comes with restrictions on individual behavior—you have to be "good" on Good Friday. One of these restrictions, which is still observed in various German areas, prohibits dancing on this particular day. Clubs and dance halls are forbidden to play music. Also, it is still common to eat the Lenten food on Good Friday, abandoning meat and eggs. Having carp for dinner on Good Friday is a widespread custom in Germany.

On the morning of Easter Sunday, it is all about the Easter egg hunt. Whether in the house, in the garden or a nearby forest, children are busy all morning looking for Easter baskets

or cardboard eggs filled with small presents: chocolate, marzipan, or sugar eggs and Easter bunnies.

A large Easter dinner is usually served on Sunday.

Typical dishes are

Easter lamb, chicken and eggs. At night—especially in the countryside—big bonfires will be lit to welcome the spring. Often, wood from Christmas trees is used for the fire.

Superstition says that the fields will be fruitful and the households will be protected from sickness as far as the light of the bonfire reaches.

However, nowadays, it is mainly a social gathering that continues into the late night.



Local Easter Events

With Easter being one of Germany's important fests, various Easter events are scheduled in the local area.

Very popular are the Easter markets. The city of Nuremberg has its Easter fest scheduled now through April 13 at the Hauptmarkt, downtown. Over 80 vendors will offer household goods, Easter decorations, pastries, Easter candy and much more. Opening hours are Mondays-Saturdays from 9.30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Easter Sunday and Monday from 10.30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Bad Windsheim has its Easter market scheduled for April 13 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Despite the German holiday, business owners will open up their shops for customers from 1-5 p.m.

The city of Dinkelsbühl hosts an Easter concert April 12 at 11:15 a.m. The Dinkelsbühl Knabkapelle will perform in their historic Rocco costumes at the Weinmarkt in front of the Schranne

The Freilandmuseum, Bad Windsheim, offers various Easter activities. From April 9-11, daily from 1-5 p.m., the Freiland-

museum will show how Easter eggs were colored before the availability of commercial egg coloring kits.

From April 11-13, daily from 1-5 p.m. interested audiences will see how different colors are made out of various plants and how they are applied to achieve different color effects.

April 12, starting at 9 a.m., children will have the opportunity to paint Easter eggs.

In addition that day, an Easter egg hunt is scheduled for children under the age of 10 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information about the Freilandmuseum events, call 09841-66800.

The city of Rothenburg has scheduled an Easter Egg hunt for April 12 at 10.30 a.m. at the Burggarten. A joint march to the city's born fire is scheduled for 7 p.m. the same day. The meeting point is the fountain at the market place.

Other born fires are scheduled for April 12 at 7:30 p.m. in Lichtenau, Sachsen and Burgoberbach.

Local Flea Markets in April

Short opening hours and crowded shops during Saturdays, as well as closed shops on Sundays, don't make it easy for those who enjoy shopping during the weekends. Antique and flea markets-usually scheduled for Saturdays and Sundays-are open up as alternatives.

Mainly set up at market places or an "Autohof," small business owners and private individuals sell a variety of old and new items. Having some time on hand and, of course, some skills in bargaining, interested shoppers often turn up with hidden treasures at these markets.

Local flea markets scheduled in April include:

Saturday, Apr. 4: Flea market at Münchener Strasse 300 in Nuremberg from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at Festplatz, Neumarkt i.d. Opf from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The flea market is one of Bavaria's biggest flea markets.

Sunday, Apr. 5: Flea market at the Media Markt, Rothenburger Straße 1 in Ansbach from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at the Auto-

hof A 7 Wörnitz from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Flea market at the Praktiker market, Ohmstr. 10 in Herzogenaurach from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, Apr. 11: Flea market at Opel Franken, Würzburger Landstraße 51 in Ansbach from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at Münchener

20 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at Münchener Strasse 300 in Nuremberg from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at Witschelstr./Ecke Von der Tann-Str. in Nuremberg from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, Apr. 19: Flea and antique market at the Stadthalle in

Dinkelsbühl from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at the Autohof A 6 Herrieden from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at the Volkfestplatz, Isle-Platz in Gunzenhausen from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, Apr. 25: Flea market at the Mainwiese in Würzburg from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at Rothenburger Str. in Nuremberg from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, Apr. 26: Flea market at Oppel-Mercedes, Liebigstrasse 1, Elpersdorf b. Ansbach from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Additional flea markets will be publicized on street advertisements about two weeks prior to the market.



Strasse 300 in Nuremberg from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market Witschelstraße/Ecke von der Tann-Str., in Nuremberg from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Flea market at Rothenburger Str. in Nuremberg from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, Apr. 18: Flea market at the A6 Autohof Herrieden from noon to 5 p.m. Flea market at Rothenburger Str. in Nuremberg from

Movie Theater

The following German movie theater shows movies in English

- original version (OV):

Roxy- Kino at Julius Loßmann-Str. 116, Nuremberg. For more information call 0911-48840 or check www.roxy-nuernberg.de

